

KEEPING NON-NATIVE INVASIVE SPECIES OUT OF YOUR WOODLAND

Your woodland is being invaded. Non-native plants, animals, insects, and diseases are making themselves at home in your woodland, and creating conditions that favor their survival over native plants and animals. The truly frightening thing is that these invaders look like a natural part of your woodland, and you probably don't even know that they are there. You would expect to see green, leafy plants with plentiful, dark, glossy berries, gray and white moths, and iridescent beetles, but these particular plants and insects don't belong here.

Some people may ask, "Why worry? Isn't one plant or insect the same as another?" No, not at all. A forest ecosystem is made up of many different parts. When one part of the ecosystem is "sick," then the whole ecosystem suffers. When native plants are displaced by foreign invaders the insects and animals that relied on that plant for food and shelter must move on to another part of the forest where they can find what they need to sustain their life. Also, since these plants aren't from around here, the insects, disease, and animals that would normally keep their population in check aren't here to do that job so these populations explode and reshape the forest to suit their needs.

What can you do?

- Identify which species belong in your woodland and which do not. You can learn more about specific non-native invasive species at the USDA's Invasive Species website at www.aphis.usda.gov/oa/invasive/invasive.html.
- Manage the spread of these non-native invasive species on your property through mechanical, chemical or biological techniques. An excellent resource is the **Nature Conservancy's Weed Control Methods Handbook**. You can contact them or visit their Weed Control Methods Handbook website at <http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/handbook.html>.
- Work to re-establish the original vegetation. While it is important to control the spread of non-native invasive species, it is even more important to maintain a healthy and diverse natural forest ecosystem that can help you fight off these invaders.

These are some simple things that you can do to protect your woodland from non-native invasive species. But most important of all, be careful to avoid introducing these pests into your woodland by planting non-native trees and shrubs, by accidentally carrying insects and diseases from quarantined areas, or by just giving up and allowing them to spread to your neighbor's property and beyond.

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